

**Government of the District of Columbia  
Executive Office of the Mayor**



**Office of Communications**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Friday, December 10, 2004**

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**Mayor Williams Announces Winner of Washington Canal Park Design Competition**  
*Leading international landscape architect will design new civic park  
at center of new neighborhood development in Southeast Washington*

(Washington DC) As a component of his Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, Mayor Anthony A. Williams announced Gustafson, Guthrie Nichol Ltd (GGN) as the winner of a design competition for a new 1.8 acre park in Washington's Near Southeast Neighborhood. GGN competed against three other finalists and recently presented its proposed designs in a public forum on November 17. A blue-ribbon jury of design professionals and community leaders evaluated the proposals the following day and unanimously selected the GGN proposal.

The winning design celebrates the history of the Washington Canal in a striking contemporary landscape. It features interpretive elements which draw on the original Benjamin Latrobe-designed canal as well as incorporating state-of-the-art sustainable design strategies to control urban storm water runoff, crucial to improving the water quality of the Anacostia River. Canal Park will be the first new major public park built as part of the Initiative.

“All of our citizens deserve great open spaces,” said Mayor Williams. “Canal Park will become the heart of the mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood that is emerging in what was once a forgotten part of our city.”

The park will become the centerpiece of a high-density, mixed-use development district, which includes the Capper Carrollsburg housing project, the US-DOT Headquarters building as well as surrounding private development.

Andrew Altman, Director of the Office of Planning said, “The selected design responded to a series of community development objectives while also proposing a dramatic new setting for surrounding buildings. The new park will undoubtedly become a signature element of the Near Southeast neighborhood and will form a new link between Capitol Hill and the Anacostia waterfront.”

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The chair of the jury, Ray Gastil, who is Manhattan Borough Planning Director in the New York City Planning Department, commented, "The jury brought together a broad range of professional and community expertise, and together we looked closely at all of the four finalists' proposals. We were consistently impressed by the caliber of the designs, and the degree to which the teams had imagined a future for this park and the evolving community around it. The selected team's proposal combined an impressive conceptual and visual elegance with a very grounded and flexible vision of how people would be able to enjoy the park for generations to come."

Ken Greenberg, member of the jury said, "The jury was faced with a number of excellent submissions and a very difficult task. The selected park design by Gustafson Guthrie Nichol brilliantly evokes the fascinating past of the Canal blocks and reveals a dynamic future. It creates a new public gathering place which will be truly welcoming and inspiring to all - neighborhood residents, workers in surrounding buildings and visitors to this vibrant re-emerging Southeast neighborhood on the Anacostia."

Kathryn Gustafson, Principal at Gustafson Guthrie Nichol LTD., said, "We are delighted at the opportunity to contribute and be a part of the exciting work being generated by the mayor's vision for the Anacostia River. For us, this is a unique opportunity to participate in the creation of a neighborhood that is rooted in the historic beginnings of Washington, and is at the same time defining the character of this wonderful city as it enters into the 21st century."

The non-profit organization Canal Park Development Association (CPDA) coordinated the design competition on behalf of the District of Columbia through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts "New Public Works" program. More than 35 leading designers from around the world responded to the initial request for qualifications. The four landscape architecture finalists were all of national or international stature:

- Gustafson Guthrie Nichol Ltd from Seattle, Washington, is known for designing parks that emphasize the sculptural quality of the landscape. Recent work includes the Lurie Garden in Chicago's Millennium Park and the Seattle Civic Center Plaza.
- Hood Design from Oakland, California, has a national reputation for using citizen involvement to create park designs that reflect the goals and aspirations of the community. Relevant work includes Splash Pad Park in Oakland and the Poplar Street Roadway plan in Macon, Georgia.
- Sasaki Associates, Inc. from Watertown, Massachusetts, has an extensive portfolio of innovative park designs that include the award winning Charleston Waterfront Park and the White River Park in Indianapolis.

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- Atelier Dreiseitl from Uberlingen, Germany, working with Stephen Stimson Associates of Falmouth, Massachusetts, is a leader in integrating water features into park designs to create environment-friendly projects with high aesthetic and social value. Their work includes the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin and the Queens Botanical Garden in New York City.

Washington Canal Park will be located at M and 2nd Streets, SE on a 3-block site along the route of the historic Washington Canal that once connected the Anacostia River to the U.S. Capitol and the Potomac River. The design of the park will be inspired by the history of the Washington Canal and also strive to incorporate state-of-the-art innovations in urban storm water management. The park will be the focal point for surrounding retail, housing and office uses and a unique gathering space for the emerging Near Southeast neighborhood.

Almost \$6 million in funding has been assembled for the park. Senator Mary Landrieu was responsible for a \$2.5 million appropriation to the non-profit organization (Canal Park Development Association) set up by the W.C. Smith Company, which is redeveloping several sites around the park. Another \$2.5 million was committed as part of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the new US-DOT Headquarters being developed by the JBG Companies. The EPA has contributed an additional \$400,000 to the park as a national demonstration project (Decentralized Infrastructure Grant) to promote research in innovative approaches to urban storm water management. Finally, the National Endowment for the Arts provided a \$50,000 matching grant to do the design competition. The DC Housing Authority has also pledged in-kind construction support as a part of the Capper Carrollsburg Hope VI project.

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